# STUDENTS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS THE USE OF CODE-SWITCHING USE IN EFL CLASSROOM

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**Abstract**

As a foreign language in Indonesia, English is still difficult subject for majority of the Indonesian students, even though it has been taught in junior high school, senior high school, English course, and another education institution. Therefore, many English learning-teaching activities in Indonesia use code-switching. Code-switching is language change (switch) in communication, from one language to another, code-switching here means Indonesian to English or English to Indonesian. This research examined the students' perception towards code-switching use in English Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. This research applied survey research method, and the instruments were consisted of questionnaire and interview session. Thirty students were involved in filling questionnaire and nine students were involved in both questionnaire and interview. The result showed that (1) majority of students agree on code-switching use in learning teaching activity (2) they perceive code-switching helps them in improving their listening skills (3) they give more respect to teachers who use code-switching when they teach (4) they consider code-switching use increases their chance in passing examination and (5) they feel more comfort and more confident when they study English.

**Keywords**: *Students' perception, Code-switching, EFL classroom*

## INTRODUCTION

Since previously, now and then, English will always become one of the most important components to build a nation where English is a foreign language. As an international language, almost every single country in the world makes English as a compulsory subject in their school or institution, including Indonesia. In Indonesia, English starts to be taught in junior and senior high school, but there are some elementary schools and kindergartens that include English as their subject or second language. However, it is rare to find a school that uses full English as its communication tool. In senior high school especially, English still becomes one of tough subjects for many students. Perhaps, by using full English in English Foreign Language (EFL) classroom would increase students' speaking or listening ability as they explore English frequently in learning teaching activity, but it is going to be hard for the students who have difficulties in English, the statement above is supported by Septeria (2015) as she stated that It might be true that by using only English in class the students would get more exposure to the language and they would be able to become more familiar with the language faster, if the English proficiency of the students is not high enough they would not be able to understand what the teachers explain to them.

In an EFL country like Indonesia, many teachers still use Indonesian as communication tools in teaching English, even it seems like much more the teachers speak in Indonesian than the English itself, teachers like mostly to speak full English only in certain situations, such as when class opening or class closing. In contrary, it is not a problem to use first language (L1) as first

language to teach English, Nazary (2008) stated that it is common for EFL teachers to speak in students' mother tongue as an instruction tool to explain or convey a meaning as a mean of interaction both in language institutes and in the classroom. Brown (1964) also stated that first language is possible to be a facilitating factor and not just an interfering factor. L1 could be used to explain English vocabularies, phrases, sentences, etc. It is in line with Dujmović (2007), he stated that native language-use is useful for language tasks such as defining vocabulary items, practicing the use of phrases and expressions, and explaining grammar rules and some important ideas. Thus, teaching English can never fully being taught in English to foreign learners, mostly teacher switch their language from English to L1 or from L1 to English.

Code-switching is the change of languages, specificly here is the changing from English to Indonesian or the opposite. Myers-Scotton (1993) cited in Catabay (2016) differentiates between the two terms, stating that code-switching happens when bilinguals alternate between two languages during one interaction with another bilingual person while code-mixing is the use of words, clauses, affixes and phrases from more than one language within the same sentences. In this case, code-switching is more likely appears in a conversation or communication than code mixing, because code switching uses by a speaker to give a clearer explanation about the main of a topic more clearly. It based on Baker (2006), he made a set of topic about code switching from a sociolinguistics point of view, in which he listed twelve main purposes of code switching, which are relevant to bilinguals talks in general. Wijanti (2014) stated that code-switching is believed as the practice of using different language variations in a single conversation. English teachers will always need code switching as their teaching tool, besides to make the material easier to be understood by the students, it also helps teachers to convey difficult material when they cannot find parable words to explain it. As stated by Brown (2001 : 99) cited in Nursanti (2016) that the use of students' L1 in foreign language classroom situations is becoming an option, as long as it is limited by the need of the first language itself and gives some distinct advantages in learning the target language.

Code-switching use in EFL classroom is commonly used by non-native English teachers. Besides to improve the English of the students in listening and speaking, it also helps teacher to think innovatively when they have to give instructions or explain a material in English. Khaerunnisa (2016) discussed that there are four advantages got by the teacher in using code-switching when he or she teaches English, they are: as a strategy to give clear explanation, to ease the teachers when they teach vocabulary, to give more effective learning situation when they teach pronunciation, and the last is as a strategy to give a distinct task instruction. It is supported by Fareed, Humayun, & Akhtar (2016), they considered that code-switching is not only increase students' comprehension and application of the material, but also provides a positive learning environment with the good of students-teacher relationship.

The explanation above leads the researchers to curiosity about students' opinion on code switching use in their learning process, their perception towards anything related to learning teaching process could help teacher or institute in understanding student needs. Goldstein, (2010) defined that perception is anything to do with illustrating the work system of the senses and the experiences and behaviors that take result from stimulation of the senses. Therefore, the researchers try to figure out about students' perception towards code-switching use in EFL classroom, whether they agree or disagree with switching language when learning teaching activity goes on.

**METHOD**

In this research, the researchers used survey research design as the research method to figure out how the students' perception or attitude about code mixing use in their English class. It is in line with Creswell (2012), he stated that survey research design is a step in conducting qualitative research where researchers administer to sample or the entire of involved population of people to give explanation about the behaviors, opinions, characteristics, or opinion of the population. Jackson (2011) percieved the essence of survey method can be explained as questioning individuals on a topic or topics and then describing their responses, by survey research design, researchers will come to know about how sample or populations' react or response toward their research.

Sampling technique was done according to Fowler (2013) steps, where the sample conducted English learning teaching activity in classroom for several meetings by using code-switching as one of communication tools, and in the last session of the meetings, the researchers gave questionnaire and interviewed some students.

Questionnaires are any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers (Brown, in Parmawati, 2018). There were 30 students as participants from XI grade senior high school, and the researcher chose three above average students, three average students, and three low students to be interviewed.Likert scale was used in this research as the sort of questionnaires. The students were given a questionnaire that consists of several statements about code switching use in EFL classroom. They were asked about their agreement and perceptions whether they are agree, strongly agree, disagree, or strongly disagree about each statement. This is in line with Ary, Jacobs and Sorensen (2010) stated that a Likert scale shows a set of statement of the topic and asking the respondents to choose whether they strongly agree, agree, are undecided, disagree, strongly disagree (cited in Rahmadani 2016).

According to Merriam (cited in Apsari, 218), In this study, interview was used to gain specific information or very useful data about students' feeling or opinion which is notaccessible through observation.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Results**

The researchers have conducted a close-ended questionnaire based on Catabay (2016), there are 18 questionnaires conducted by Catabay (2016) while the researchers took six questionnaires only that were related to this research. The table of questionnaire is shown below.

| No. | ITEM DESCRPRIPTION | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I prefer to study in English and Indonesian. | 40 % | 56,7 % | 3,3 % | |
| 2. | Mixing Indonesian and English leads to the maintenance of both languages. | 33,3 % | 53,3 % | 13,4 % | |
| 3. | I feel satisfied during the process of learning when I mix Indonesian and English. | 20 % | 56,7 % | 23,3 % | |
| 4. | I understand difficult concepts when taught in Indonesian and English. | 10 % | 63,3 % | 23,3 % | 3,4 % |
| 5. | I respect more the teacher when teaching in Indonesian and English | 46,7 % | 50 % | | 3,3 % |
| 6. | Teaching in Indonesian and English increases my chance in passing the examination. | 33,3 % | 56,7 % | 10 % | |

## Discussion

First item reveals the students views towards the use of code switching in teaching. 12 or 40 % students strongly agreed to be taught in English and Indonesian and 17 or 56.7 % agreed about it, while 1 or 3.3 % students disagree. This only means that code switching in class have a positive view from the students.

Second item shows that 10 or 33.3 % of the students strongly agree and 16 or 53.3 % agree that mixing Indonesian and English leads to the maintenance of both languages, while 4 or 13.4 % students disagree. This only means that code switching does not give a negative effect to the students' first and second language, instead; it helps in the maintenance of both their first and second language. Again this reveals that the students have a positive view toward code switching.

Third item illustrates whether code switching affects their emotional state or not, 7 or 23.3 % of the students disagree with the item's statement, while 6 or 20 % of the students strongly agree and 17 or 56.7 % agree with it. This describes that majority of the learners in a positive state when they use English and Indonesian as a medium of communication in class.

Fourth item illustrates the impact of students' comprehension in understanding difficult materials when the teacher uses code switching, 19 or 63.3 % of students agree and 3 or 10 % of students strongly agree with it, while 7 or 23.3 % disagree and 1 or 3.4 % disagree. This implies that code switching has positive impact on students' learning process.

Fifth item reflects how much students' respect on teachers who use English and Indonesian when teaching. 14 or 46.7 % of the students strongly agree and 15 or 50 % agree that they give more respect to the teachers who use code switching when they teach, while it is only 1 or 3.3 % who strongly disagree. It means that students are more comfortable with teacher who teaches using both in English and Indonesia.

The last item divulges students' ability in passing exam when they are taught in English and Indonesian. As the table shows only 3 or 10 % of the students who disagree with the item's

statement, while the rest 10 or 33.3 % strongly agree and 17 or 56.7 % agree. This reveals that the most of students can enhance their success possibility when they facing exam.

As an addition instrument, interview session was also conducted to support and strengthen the data. The questions of the interview session are mentioned below.

1. Do you think code switching (English to Indonesian) use in EFL classroom is useful?
2. What benefits do you get from code switching use?
3. Does code switching disturb your concentration when learning English?
4. Does code switching help you in understanding English? Why?
5. What is your opinion about teacher who uses code switching?
6. Do you support code switching in classroom?

According the result of the interview, it can be concluded that mostly students gave positive responds toward code switching use. Code switching helps students in learning English and makes them more confident. They have to force themselves to speak English when learning teaching activity goes on, but they do not have to be confused whenever they find difficultiesin speaking English, because they just need to switch their language from English to L1. There are several benefits stated by the students that they got from code switching use in EFL classroom: making students easier in learning English, improving their vocabularies and grammar, improving their listening skills, helping them to understand difficult materials, there is no any misunderstand in between teacher and students, encourage them to speak English, dismisses confusion in learning activity, make them more confident in learning English.

**CONCLUSION**

This research was conducted to the eleventh grade of one senior high schools in Cimahi, the school is MAN 1 Kota Cimahi. According to the result of the conducted questionnaire and interview above, majority of the students had positive perception and agree on the use of code switching in EFL classroom that it could give them more motivation to study English. It could be seen from the table that shows most of students agree toward code switching use in classroom, as example 12 or 40 % students strongly agree and 17 or 56.7 % agree to study in English and Indonesian. Another result shows that most of students agree about how code-switching affects their comprehension in understanding difficult materials. As the data shows 19 or 63.3 % of students agree and 3 or 10 % of students strongly agree with it, while 7 or 23.3 % disagree and 1 or 3.4 % disagree that code switching helps them to understand difficult materials when the teaching learning process goes on. Thus, code switching is helpful and useful to teach English in EFL classroom. Besides it, the students also got many benefits from the use of code switching: making students easier in learning English, improving their vocabularies and grammar, improving their listening skills, helping them to understand difficult materials, there is no any misunderstand in between teacher and students, encourage them to speak English, dismisses confusion in learning activity, and make them more confident in learning English.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

publishing this article and helped the researchers to make this article more appropriate to be published.

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